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ABSTRACT

Excluding poetry, number, wordless, alphabet, and information books, this paper discusses the work of 10 visually significant picture book illustrators who published in the 1980s. The books included in the paper, both traditional tales and modern stories, were illustrated by Anthony Browne, Henrik Drescher, Lois Ehlert, Stephen Gammell, Ivan Gantschev, Adrienne Kennaway, Dayal Kaur Khalsa, Deborah Nourse Lattimore, Robert Rayevsky, and Ed Young. The paper also includes a discussion of significant picture books in the 1980s by other illustrators arranged by historical and instructional significance and by the medium used. A list of featured books, arranged by illustrator, is attached. (RS)

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Ten from the Decade:

Visually Significant Picture Books and Why

by

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University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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Interest in picture books has intensified in the last decade, a phenomenon which pleases many of us. When Barbara Bader published, in 1976, her still-impressive American Picturebooks from Noah's Ark to The Beast Within (Macmillan), it sat nearly alone on a shelf occupied only by the equally fine but shorter The Child's First Books by Donnarae MacCann and Olga Richard (H. W. Wilson, 1973). Since then, our bookshelves have expanded with the addition of Susan Meyer's A Treasury of the Great Children's Book Illustrators (Abrams, 1983), Uri Shulevitz's Writing with Pictures (Watson-Guptill, 1985), Lyn Lacy's Art and Design in Children's Picture Books (ALA, 1986), and Perry Nodelman's Words About Pictures (U. Of GA Press, 1988). Now these fine resources have been joined by Douglas Martin's The Telling Line. In addition to such full length books, periodicals publish shorter pieces on more narrowly focused aspects of picture books, and such organizations as the Association for Library Service to Children, and the National Council of Teachers of English sponsor workshops on the art of illustration.

Given all this activity, surveying the past decade to identify some books which represent particularly outstanding artists seemed like an

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interesting challenge. Especially given the increased use of picture books in whole language programs, a summary look at the last ten years seems wise.

Limiting the Field

First, it is important to clarify the range of this survey, by describing the categories of books not included. There are superbly illustrated books of poetry, such as Sing a Song of Popcorn, selected by de Regniers et al. (Scholastic, 1988). Nine Caldecott Medal artists did the pictures, such stellar names as Marcia Brown, the Dillons, and Marc Simont, among others. The section done by Margot Zemach is free, quirky, and exemplifying the best in a relaxed watercolor technique. Her omnipresent, lumpy, homely peasant stock characters are sometimes presented almost without background so we can enjoy Zemach's attention to clothing details. At other times we get just enough background to anchor the characters in a particular place but not so much as to overwhelm.

Another category not included is the wordless book, though the past decade has seen many fine examples, like The Red Thread by Tord Nygren (R & S Books, 1987). In double page spreads bled to the edge, this artist brings a tired old technique, the concealed objects idea, to life in deliciously fresh watercolors which will appeal to visually oriented, artistic children. This forest is alive with faces much as Arthur Rackham's forests were alive, but in this case these are obviously friendly spirits, not threatening as some of Rackham's were.

It was tempting to include number/counting books in this survey, because there have been some especially fine ones lately. One of the best

is Puzzlers by Suse MacDonald (Dial, 1989) in which she uses cut paper shapes in lushly varied colors stroked with a brush onto the paper. The transformation from the number into the variety of shapes depicting the animal is remarkably inventive. Capturing the very fluid numbers as they change within the rigid square outline boxes on each left page provides a pleasant contrast to the movement of the numbers, and lets child viewers anticipate the predictable page design.

Artists often turn their attention to alphabet books, a fascinating genre reluctantly excluded from this survey. Among many strong books in this category is An Alphabet of Animals by Christopher Wormell (Dial, 1990). Coming nearly 70 years after the still-impressive ABC Book by C.B. Falls (Doubleday, 1923) which also used woodcut, this book shows the imaginative abstraction possible in this medium. The book is handsomely-bound in dark green, coarse linen cloth, and to this a cover illustration printed on paper is glued, which forecasts the strength found inside. The solid, brick red-brown endpapers pick up the color introduced on the cover illustration. Before the title page, a double spread introduces reduced facsimiles of all 26 pages. On each left facing page, a large letter is opposite a full right side illustration, all printed on a glossy, faintly cream colored stock which takes the color of the woodcuts well.

The book demonstrates, with very different visual content, the role of color in woodcut, and thus is a pleasant contrast with the vigorous A Farmer's Alphabet by Mary Azarian (Godine, 1981), also published within this decade. This narrow vertical rectangle (8-1/2" x 13") is an effective

showcase for Azarian's angular, heavily-patterned illustrations printed only on the right hand pages, and featuring solidly black woodcuts. The upper and lower case letters are done in a thick serif style, and the single word found at the bottom of each page is printed in a brick red-brown, similar to that used by Wormell.

Information books have increased in quantity and quality during the past decade. No one does these with more flair than Leonard Everett Fisher, as in The Great Wall of China (Macmillan, 1986). This demonstrates what we sometimes forget, that color is a pleasant, though not necessary component in fine children's books. Fisher continually shows the subtle nuances possible using just black and white, in these heavily painted double page spreads full of motion. On each page his pictures are accompanied by the black characters and red seals for a restrained touch of color.

Having thus set aside poetry, number, wordless, alphabet and information books, I selected picture story books that to me exemplify the very best in illustration over the past decade. These books, both traditional tales and modern stories, include works by such American illustrators as Lois Ehlert and by such non-American illustrators as Anthony Browne.

Despite the inclusion of some non-American illustrators, this is not a survey of picture book illustration internationally, as done so impressively every year at the Bologna International Children's Book Fair and by the subsequent annual volume, Illustrators of Children's Books, published by Picture Book Studio. Such an international survey would

present an even more daunting selection task than the more narrow focus here.

Ten Exemplary Artists

The following survey concentrates for the most part on only one book from each person, though in some cases other of the artist's work is discussed.

In Yeh-Shen. A Cinderella Story from China, illustrator Ed Young is at his decorative best. This artist is continually interesting: we marvel at the variety in his work, as in the understated charcoal drawings in his wordless books, Up a Tree and The Other Bone (1983, 1984; both Harper), which demonstrate that he doesn't need color to create evocative people and animals doing interesting things. In contrast, in The Girl Who Loved the Wind by Jane Yolen (Harper, 1972), he explored a mixed media of watercolor and collage, developing pictures reminiscent of Persian miniatures. The juxtaposition of patterns placed above, below, and between the text, lends a full color vivacity which makes the book distinctively different than his other work.

In this retelling of the Cinderella story, Young uses the white of the page to enhance the vivid pastels medium he used. Once again we see the juxtaposition of patterns, but with more paper showing. The panels remind viewers of the elegantly vertical oriental screens which are also so understated, though in several cases in this book, parts of objects breech the thin red-orange rule which surrounds each frame. A light tonality pervades this book, from the dust jacket throughout, that contrasts with the dark foreboding in Young's Lon Po Po (Philomel, 1989), or the fiery

brightness in The Voice of the Great Bell retold by Margaret Hodges (Little, Brown, 1989).

My Family Vacation is typical of the visually distinctive work that Dayal Kaur Khalsa produced during the past decade. The artist creates a resolutely two-dimensional world, vividly alive with highly saturated, flat colors. The quasi art deco lettering is a visual referent children will not necessarily understand, though it gives an added cachet to the overall book design. The cover and endpapers announce in no uncertain terms that this is going to be a visually noisy production, and Khalsa keeps this promise. Her juxtaposition of patterns evokes a feeling similar to the paintings of the French primitive artist, Henri Rousseau. Unlike his rural, landscape-dominated pictures, Khalsa's are urban environments, alive with the lights and confusion often found in cities. One element of stability in these purposely busy paintings is the text, always set predictably beneath the pictures. Shapes and design are paramount in this work, with shapes arranged from top to bottom of the page, rather than from front to back of a created picture plane, as for example in Trina Schart Hyman's work.

In most of her work for this book, Khalsa keeps viewers at about the same visual distance, looking head-on at the pictures. In an illustration of the children sleeping, however, she gives us a bird's eye view taken from further away. No matter the distance, Khalsa always catches and holds our eye with repetitive patterns completely filling the space.

In sharp contrast to the intensity of Khalsa's work is the cool, cerebral quality of Robert Rayevsky's illustrations, as in Mister

Cat-and-a-half, a traditional tale by Richard Pevear. Rayevsky's meticulously detailed, three dimensional approach to illustration is displayed on the cover, which like the remainder of the book's pages, relies on a generous white background as an effective foil for the objects themselves. Our eyes roam freely over the animals and objects depicted, never distracted by unnecessary backgrounds. This is well-developed, traditional draftsmanship, turned to illustrating the type of tale it showcases so well. Low intensity colors underlie the ink line which gives definition to the form, but the colors never call attention to themselves. Rather, they are simply there to complete the statement about form which the line drawings initiate.

Inside the book the full page drawings, always located on right facing pages, are unencumbered with text, which remains on the left page. The anticipatible format underscores the traditional orientation of this artistic style. The drawings are an interesting combination of disparate elements. The modeling of the animal bodies is convincingly three dimensional, while the treatment of the tree leaves as a regularly repeated design, rather than a realistic depiction, makes a pleasant contrast. The humor in the illustrations comes from the contrast between these realistically-rendered animals, very unrealistically depicted as dressed in elegant human finery from some quite specific, though unidentified past time period.

In Hot Hippo, Adrienne Kennaway presents a charming, light-hearted and brightly-rendered showcase for an original tale inspired by life in the African bush as retold by Mwenge Hadithi. There is no attempt at literal

representation, but rather a symbolic depiction of animals and plants. The artist begins with real animals and foliage, but simplifies and smooths the shapes until viewers get a harmonious whole in which an overriding tonality provides unity.

In many of the illustrations, subtle changes in shades and tints of the basic color scheme are apparent. The trees are not trees--rather they are symbols for trees, as the artist invites us to enjoy them for the repetition they present. This is not nature, but a representation of nature. The approach is similar to one used by Virginia Lee Burton, and her artistic, if not formal mentor, the American regionalist painter, Grant Wood, both of whom subjugated nature to their own artistic wills.

The text is usually superimposed unobtrusively on part of the illustration, the san serif lettering a reflection of the smoothness of the pictures. At other times the words are set separately in a block to the left or right of the illustration. In this, as in their Crafty Chameleon which won the 1987 Kate Greenaway Award, and in Tricky Tortoise (1988; both Little, Brown) these Kenya residents continue exploring the successful combination of words and pictures which result in such distinctive picture books.

Deborah Nourse Lattimore turns her boundless imagination to a largely unfamiliar, historic culture, drawing deeply from a thoroughly-trained art history background, and careful research, to produce yet another visually distinctive book. In The Flame of Peace she provides viewers with much pictorial information, meticulously rendered in a flat, decorative style, carefully organized on the page in a formal balance.

The endpapers, also formally organized, give viewers much to pour over; in fact the 48 smaller labeled illustrations surround and add to the visual information Lattimore provides in the two larger, central panels. Matching these small sketches with similar details in the illustrations would be an enlightening and satisfying experience to enlarge understanding and appreciation of the Aztec world. In the endpapers and throughout the book, Lattimore's line, unvarying in width, confines her bright colors. She further keeps the color from overwhelming the viewer by setting it against the parchment-like neutral background.

With so much going on in the pictures, it is evident why Lattimore constrains the text beneath the pictures in a comfortable, anticipatible location. The visual revelry frequently breaks out of the confines of the simple red frame, emphasizing the vitality of the story and the culture it reflects.

The rounded lines of the many human figures she portrays far outnumber the fewer straight lines found in the architecture, conveying a sense of movement even though we realize that in this resolutely flat world there really isn't any deep space through which characters can actually move.

On the concluding panel, the artist brings all this action to rest. The placid horizontal rectangle enclosing the text is decorated but not disturbed by the rounded lines of the Aztec motifs. The action has come to a halt, signaling visually what the text foretells: "the beginning of many peaceful decades." In other books, similarly grounded in impressively wide cultural and art history understandings, Ms. Lattimore acquaints readers with Minoan, Mayan, and Chinese civilizations.

Ivan Gantschev's The Moon Lake shows once again what a wonderfully skilled master the man is of watercolor, diluted with a lot of water, and applied to wet paper. The softly-rounded shapes, and "runny" edges show an artist willing to take chances with this unpredictable medium. Lesser artists work on dryer paper where it is easier to control outcomes. The Bulgarian Gantschev takes chances with this volatile medium and produces in the process impressive work.

The pictures splash across the entire double page spread and disappear off the page edge with no restraining borders. Working in a fairly sombre, low-key palette, Gantschev creates many differing but related tonalities. On the first opening of this unpaged book, there are many different shades of purple in this single illustration. The fuzzy edges of the hills, and the accent clump of small trees right of center, contrast with the sharper edges of the large mountain formations.

At other times the artist's palette brightens and the craggy shapes give way to more comfortable rounded forms, but always the marvelous liquidity of the wet technique remains. It is brought into focus here and there--for example, in a picture later in the book. This contrasts very fluid trees with the definite shapes of the rocks of the well and the sheep--areas probably painted in after the paper had dried considerably.

When the conflict in the text escalates, the rendering becomes sharper and clearer. Near the story's end, the building, the officials, and the well (interestingly caged with a wire superstructure) are much more clearly depicted than objects on previous pages. The artist frames the confrontation with the encircling trees and the buildings, but leaves the

foreground blank, to emphasize Peter's feeling of aloneness. The illustrator uses the same medium and page layout with equal effectiveness in his Journey of the Storks (Picture Book Studio, 1983).

The dictionary defines an iconoclast as one who seeks to overthrow traditional or popular ideas, and this definition seems a fair description of Henrik Drescher. He is an artist who through his exploring seeks to overturn our visual expectations of the conventional sunlit, happy world so often depicted in picture books.

"What is going on here?" and "Why is this happening?" seem to be two questions one can rightly ask after studying his work. In viewing Simon's Book, we could ask "Who are these characters?" and "Why is this fanged and hairy animal pursuing Simon?" We might also wonder: "What is the author's intent in using that scrappy, hand lettering?" "Why is the frame so unlike the usual frames we see in children's illustrations?" "Why is there not a single visual clue as to where this event is taking place?"

The endpapers similarly question our conventional expectations. We anticipate solid colors, or a clearly-defined pattern, or sharply-drawn pictorial endpapers--the usual ones artists provide in children's books. Yet in this book Dresher gives us a slapdash, casual, and thus disconcerting bridge between the cover and the title page. We ask: "What is this disorganization, and where will it lead?"

The answer is it leads into an entire book in which each page layout is different from every other one--in which there is literally no visual convention we can anticipate. Sometimes we have closeup views with text

embedded into pictures that feature strange objects, among them the Salvador Dali-like pens.

At other times we view the action at a distance with the text firmly separated from the formally bordered picture, but with a strangely bizarre set of seemingly random patterns. Simon, a visual descendent of the much earlier "Shock-Headed Peter," stares open-mouthed, his curiously unchildlike, lumpy body, and unreasonably spindly arms clearly no defense against seemingly unavoidable doom.

On other pages Dresher plays with the frame, bending it--literally--to suit his will and making us wonder at the undefined void which seems to loom behind the picture. In this, as in other of his work, Henrik Dresher keeps viewers continually on their toes, never knowing what to expect, never being able to use their previously constructed visual schema to interpret his work. Because of this, he seems the descendent of the many different artists doing imaginative visual work published in the 1960s by the Harlan Quist publishing company. That work expanded our understanding of what was possible in illustration for children,[1] in a way similar to Dresher's expansion of our understanding today. It will be interesting to see what sort of work Dresher's art will make possible thirty years from now.

Stephen Gammel, in Come a Tide uses watercolor and chalks, evoking a disheveled world inhabited by the modern day equivalent of Margot Zemach's earlier peasant types. Strong, individualistic people are portrayed sympathetically, warts and all! These characters are doing interesting things, often accompanied by a lot of other people, and often by equally

rapscallion pets. At times Gammel gives viewers pages divided up arbitrarily in ways which are visually interesting, though not necessary for establishing his setting.

There is much page variation, as on the ninth opening of this unpaged book. To accommodate text, the picture on the left doesn't fill the entire page. Its edge is sharp, but that is modified by the rain splashing down, and in fact even making the colors from the drawing run off into the white space, a device which reinforces what the text tells us about how really wet it is. On the right page the picture bleeds to the edge, allowing Gammel to invite his viewers for a closeup look at the welcoming action.

Like Zemach, Gammel evokes a very particular location, but does it using very little background. This isn't like many picture book stories which can happen in a generic nowhere. But with only a few deft details Gammel shows us the specifics of this Appalachian setting. For these pencil illustrations, the "linear strokes and softened colors" that critic Barbara Kiefer commends,[2] the book was awarded the Caldecott Honor and listed as an ALA Notable Book. Gammel shows the same variety in his illustrations for The Relatives Came, another story set in a similar location, written by Cynthia Rylant (Bradbury, 1985).

Lois Ehlert presents viewers with a strong, sure visual language in which color, shapes, and repetition carry the message. Her Planting a Rainbow shows this world created and controlled by the artist, not simply recorded and modified as other artists do. Ehlert always begins in the real world, but as the French postimpressionist painter Henri Matisse did, she sees this simply as a starting point on a journey toward her own world.

To make this comparison clear to children, we might, for example, look at the cut paper shapes Matisse did toward the end of his life as presented in Meet Matisse by Nellie Munthe (Little, Brown, 1983). As Munthe comments:

> Now it was no longer the leaf itself that interested him, but its potential--how it could work as an element of a larger composition ... the personal expression of a leaf--Matisse's leaf! (p. 10)

The same thing is true of Ehlert's plant forms in this book.

Using high intensity, flat, saturated colors, Ehlert shows us a vibrancy seldom evident in actual flowers. There are variations in color--for example the several different shades of purple used, but within the individual shapes, color is constant, unvarying.

Ehlert's crisp, hard edges offer viewers the comfort of knowing exactly where each shape begins and ends. No messy, imprecise edges for her! The visual field may be crowded--she often includes a lot of object symbols, but we can always tell where one ends and another begins.

Repetition characterizes Ehlert's work. Shapes are repeated as is decoration within shapes. Note on the back of the dust jacket how 3 is juxtaposed against 2, in the small purple flowers with yellow centers. The march of the multiple-headed flowerets, i.e., the blue of the left, and the purple clusters on the right, is two by two. Yet this is interrupted by the single iris between the clusters. On the farthest right flower cluster, the 3 leaves left of the stem are juxtaposed against the 2 on the right. This is the visual equivalent of what musical composers like Charles Ives do when in the same piece they have some musicians play in one meter like 4/4 time, while at the same time others play a different meter like 3/4 time.[3]

Elsewhere Ehlert's visual field is less crowded, and thus even more effective. On the fifth opening of this unpaged book, all of the visual detail is organized within the confines of the wagon and its handle, with the remainder of the page absolutely backgroundless. The white page serves both as a resting place for the eye, and also as an intensifier of the colors. The bagged rose, outside the wagon, is a unifier between the text and the wagon, reinforcing the connection established by the shaped right edge of the text. The two left rose branches bring our eye down from the text while the one right branch directs us back up to the wagon, in the process inscribing an undrawn V shape between text and picture.

On several pages Ehlert uses the strong horizontal orientation in the double page spread, the layer of dirt serving as an organizing structure within which she arranges her repeated shapes. She gives viewers technically accurate information (different sizes and shapes of seeds for example), but in an abstracted, simplified form, similar to the way the designers of architectural glyphs code their information. Children see, to use Geraldine DeLuca's words,

> a deliberately simplified and somewhat abstract cryptogram of reality ... in a way that the child can feel comfortable with yet that is original and fresh.[4]

The gradually increasing page size toward the end of the book is a clever device. Where the page is almost back at full size again, showing blue flowers, the sinuous line of the morning glories on the left contrasts with the sharply vertical lines of the plants on the right. Again we have the repetition in varying numbers. On the left there is a 3 against 2. (Though there are 3 flowers, only 2 are open.) On the right we see 2

against 1. (The 2 cornflowers are set against the delphinium and the hyacinth, so distinct they each function as single units.)

Throughout this, and later of her books, Ehlert revels in the three elements she has chosen to emphasize: color, shape, and repetition. It is a limited visual vocabulary--other artists chose to use more. But it is clearly enough to satisfy both the artist and her viewers.

Anthony Browne seems to take particular delight in catching viewers off guard, lulling us with realistically rendered depictions of familiar objects, but continually juxtaposing them unexpectedly. As Douglas Martin describes it, "an inexhaustible blend of puzzlement and precision ...."[5] In this way, Browne's work is tied to that of such other surrealist painters as Yves Tanguy and Salvador Dali.

In Gorilla, for example, we can easily "read," i.e., decipher the illustration on the third opening. The girl, the television, and the framed wall map, are realistically rendered. But, what is the import of this? Why is she so tiny, so dwarfed by the scale of the rest of the room? Why is the glow of the television so exaggerated? It does, we notice belatedly, bring out a pleasant wallpaper pattern remarkably different than the pattern appears to be elsewhere on the wall.

Another way Browne heightens this surrealism is through manipulation of visual distance, or how far viewers appear to be from the picture. Obviously we hold the book at a relatively constant physical distance, but Browne varies how far viewers seem to be from the action. For example, on the fifth opening of this unpaged book, we see the chimp from the girl's

perspective, looking up at him from her bed. We are closer to this scene than in the seventh, but farther than in the ninth opening.

On the seventh opening, we are kept at middle distance, close enough to see the detail of the chimp's dotted bow tie and unstylish plaid hat, but far enough to be safely out of range of his swinging feet, perhaps? Browne frames the action as a tableau, set solidly between the tree trunks on left and right side. So again there is a seeming contradiction: this is supposed to represent vigorous swinging from branch to branch, yet it is curiously motionless, seemingly caught by stop action photography, with the movement suspended. The same is true of the cat, so surprised it leaps with all four feet off the ground, and yet this action seems frozen in time as well.

On the ninth opening, Browne zooms in for a closeup view of the chimpanzee, every wrinkle and hair showing because we are nose to nose with the character. He doesn't seem threatening, however, because he is firmly constrained by the cage bars. As Douglas Martin points out, encagement is a theme of recurring interest to Browne. In his illuminating essay on Browne, Martin describes how in an earlier book, Hansel and Gretel (Knopf, 1981), Browne also experimented with varying ways to depict both explicitly and implicitly, how people are caught in cages.

Other Possibilities

In addition to this personal selection of significant illustrators, there would, of course, be other ways to identify picture books significant in this decade. We might think historically, and examine two trends. One is the availability of older works with their original illustrations. For

instance, we could consider both My Father's Dragon by Ruth Stiles Gannett (Random House, 1986) and Little Chicken by Margaret Wise Brown (Harper, 1971) as examples.

The Gannett book, originally published in 1948, was reissued recently with the addition of long-lost endpaper maps in full color. Several illustrations for each chapter, including some full page, some double spreads, and many smaller vignettes, are done in an impressive array of black and grey tones by Ruth Chrisman Gannett, the author's artist-stepmother. We might look with children at the tonalities here as contrasted with those Chris Van Allsburg achieves in The Garden of Abdul Gazazzi (Houghton, 1979).

Another example is Little Chicken published in 1943 by the legendary Margaret Wise Brown, and illustrated by the equally well-known Leonard Weisgard. Long out of stock but now newly available from the publisher, it follows a visual pattern commonly used by this artist. Pages in many different shades of sepia alternate with others in a limited color array. Here, orange and green wash is added to the sepia on every other opening.

Certainly in a comprehensive program of sharing book illustration with children, some conscious attempt to make students aware that older illustrations differ in style and medium from work being done today would be important. Another historical aspect is the publishing of books with new illustrations for old stories. For example, Charlotte Zolotow's The White Marble was originally published in 1963 by Abelard-Schuman, with illustrations by Lilian Obligado. Those illustrations were done in blue watercolor wash of varying intensity, with the impressionistic pictures

detailed through charcoal drawings applied over the wash. On a few pages magenta chalk is added. This is now available with illustrations by Deborah Kogan Ray (Crowell, 1982). In this case a smaller, square format presents Ray's easily-identifiable charcoal drawings on a page surrounded by a thin black rule, a crisp contrast with the atmospheric drawings typical of this artist. Among other examples of such reillustrating of older texts is the newly released version of Alvin Tresselt's Sun Up with pictures by Henri Sorensen (Lothrop, 1991). The book is again available 42 years after original publication.

We might also consider books significant based on their instructional use. For example, Charles Mikolaycak's fine full color illustrations for Peter and the Wolf (Viking, 1982) are particularly helpful in doing the sort of comparing and contrasting we know is important in a comprehensive literature program. Having an additional set of illustrations to use with others for the same title is always beneficial. Mikolaycak's edition might be compared with ones by Jorg Muller (Knopf, 1986), Reg Cartwright (Holt, 1987), Erna Voigt (Godine, 1980), and Josef Palececk (Picture Book Studio, 1987); each provides a unique view of the world, characters, and events in the same story. In doing that sort of activity we're following a recommendation from the noted aesthetician, Rudolph Arnheim.[6]

Or, we might select a list of titles significant because of the medium used. For example, in a complete program of book sharing, we'd be sure to include the etchings in Noah's Ark by Arthur Geisert (Houghton, 1988), in which an amazing sense of three-dimensions is created through the artist's

use of thin black line in hatching and crosshatching. Cross-sectioned views of the ark, done from close-up, medium range, and far away, convey effectively the claustrophobic spaces shown. We would include the batik illustrations for the counting book 17 Kings and 42 Elephants done by Patricia MacCarthy for the text written by Margaret Mahy (Dial, 1987). Throughout the cheerful colors in pleasantly repeated patterns are always outlined with a varying-width white line. The technique as presented in this book could be compared with the same medium as used by Edda Reinl in The 3 Little Pigs (Picture Book Studio, 1983). Or we might choose the sensitive constructions in plasticene by Barbara Reid for Ellen Oppenheimer's Have You Seen Birds? (Scholastic, 1986), as unusual a book as any to come along in the past decade. It demonstrates so positively for children that even humble mediums can result in impressive art work. There are other examples of artists experimenting with media beyond the better known ones, and these should be included in illustration study.

Conclusion

These books represent ten visually significant artists from this decade. Their work varies widely in use of visual elements: from representational to abstract forms, from subdued to intense colors, from sharp to equivocal line, from flat to three-dimensional shapes, and from deep to shallow space. What these artists have in common is a sense that the picture book, with their own or some other author's words, provides a stimulating context in which to create.

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Featured Children's Books*

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*Listed by illustrator.

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